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6 February 1958

Assistant Director, ORR

Chief, Geographic Research

Intelligence Communications

REFERENCE:Memorandum to Intelligence Assistant Directors, same subject, dated  
23 January 1958

1. There seems to be a vast amount of wisdom in the Kilian Committee recommendation that intelligence communications be improved by June of 1958 so that all critical intelligence -- particularly that relating to Early Warning -- would be transmitted from the field to action officials in Washington within ten minutes. As far as the Geographic Area is concerned, I cannot at this time identify any information of a type which I feel should be received by us within a matter of minutes or hours after the event. I can conceive of specific needs for certain kinds of information -- not of tremendous volume -- which the Geographic Area should have within 24 hours. However, this would be entirely dependent upon the role that components of the Area would play in supporting various kinds of critical operations being maintained as a result of the initiation of hostilities. The type and volume of information which is not affected by the time factor is tremendous, and can be reflected only by our general and specific requirements which are on file with reading panels and field collection facilities.

2. My immediate reaction to [REDACTED] paper is that something should be done to solve the communications problem of intelligence. Whether his model is the proper one I do not know. I do, however, have some general observations which result from reading his paper. They are as follows:

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a. The communications system, whatever it might be, should be entirely under the control of and responsive to the intelligence community.

b. Systems should be developed by a group of technical experts called in especially to examine the various types of communications needs and to come up with a system designed to take care of those specific needs. Such a system would have to be as secure as possible and provide for as rapid a means of transmittal as possible.

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c. The system should not be subjected to unreasonable burdens of transmitting materials which do not have a time-factor urgency.

3. Whatever is done to improve the technological features of an intelligence communications system must, it seems to me, be matched by a like improvement in the handling of both ends of the system by people.

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